

Baker	Northern Territory
ANZSCO Code: 3511-11	October 2009
Labour market rating	No shortage
Comment:	

Occupational demand

ABS Census data shows that there were 160 Bakers and Pastry Cooks employed in the NT in 2006, stable compared with the 2001 level. Food retailing turnover during the three year period since June 2006 has grown by an annual average rate of 10 per cent (ABS 8501.0; Retail Trade). DEEWR's skilled vacancy survey indicates advertised vacancies for Bakers peaked in 2008, but dropped off significantly in 2009.

Occupational supply

The number of people in Baker apprenticeships in 2009 is on par with the previous three years; however this is significantly below the three year period prior to that and as a result apprenticeship completions have declined. Although the cancellation rate is greater than 50 per cent, it is lower than for Cook apprenticeships and the local training rate for the trade is relatively high. The training rate is, however, not enough to meet demand and there is also a reliance on recruiting travellers and transient workers.

Employer and industry comments/current labour market

Employers were able to fill 80 per cent of vacancies surveyed (an improvement on the fill rate of 20 per cent achieved when the occupation was last assessed in 2007). The number of quality of applicants received varied considerably between vacancies, with some employers attracting a strong field and others struggling to attract a single suitable applicant.

A higher turnover rate was a common issue for employers and they would sometimes need to cover vacancies by hiring backpackers or transient workers to temporarily fill positions. The highly transient nature typical of many people recruited to vacancies meant that keeping positions filled was a regular concern. The majority of vacancies surveyed were due to staff turnover. Employers also suggested that they had trouble retaining apprentices and sourcing people willing to begin in the trade (due to the unattractive work hours required) was difficult.

Employers suggested wastage was an issue for the trade (with qualified Bakers choosing to work in other industries) and was caused by unattractive work hours and wage pressures. The high cost of living in the NT, particularly the difficulty securing an affordable rental property, has lead to some Bakers seeking work elsewhere.

Labour market outlook

Demand for Bakers over the coming year is expected to remain relatively stable. However, continued high staff turnover, low apprenticeship completion numbers and increased interstate demand may push the trade into shortage over the coming year.